Value: Utilitarianism

* The greatest good for the greatest amount of people

First, it is a relatively simple ethical system to apply. **To determine whether an action is moral you merely have to calculate the good and bad consequences that will result from a particular action. If the good outweighs the bad, then the action is moral.**

Second, **utilitarianism avoids the need to appeal to divine revelation. Many adherents to this ethical system are looking for a way to live a moral life** apart from the Bible and a belief in God. **The system replaces revelation with reason. Logic rather than an adherence to biblical principles guides the ethical decision-making of a utilitarian.**

Value Criterion: Upholding Democracy

The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy says:

First, **democracy concerns collective decision making, by which** I mean **decisions that are made for groups and that are binding on all the members of the group.** **Second, this definition means to cover a lot of different kinds of groups that may be called democratic. So there can be democracy in families, voluntary organizations, economic firms, as well as states and transnational and global organizations.** Third, the definition is not intended to carry any normative weight to it. It is quite compatible with this definition of democracy that it is not desirable to have democracy in some particular context. **So the definition of democracy does not settle any normative questions. Fourth, the equality required by the definition of democracy may be more or less deep.**

(Christiano, Tom, "Democracy", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2008 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2008/entries/democracy/>.)

Contention1: Upholding a true representative democracy

* Every vote counts
  + Every ballot that is put in ensures a fair election.

The U.S. Department of Defense says:

**In Oregon, Rep. Jim Bunn was losing to his opponent in the state's 5th Congressional District in 1994 until election officials counted the absentee ballots. The absentee count gave Bunn a 7,000 vote victory, returning him to Congress**

(Master Sgt. Stephen Barrett, American Forces Press Service, September 1996**, *Recent Election Results Prove Every Vote Counts***)

Contention 2: Compulsory Voting ensures the will of the people

* CV makes sure that the citizens’ opinions may be expressed.

**The Dirksen Congressional Center** states:

You can't win if you don't play. **Election outcomes are determined by those who participate. Elected officials make important (often life and death) decisions about how our society will expand its collective resources and the restraints it will place on individual behavior. The drinking age, the age at which you can get a driver's license and the amount of money your teachers receive are some of the decisions made by elected officials. In making those decisions, elected officials respond to people who** bother to **vote more than to those who abstain.** Voting does not guarantee that one's preferences will prevail, but **choosing not to vote denies a person one of the key tools of having a say in a democracy.**

("CongressLink." Weblog post. *CongressLink RSS*. N.p., n.d. Web. 27 Aug. 2013. <http://www.congresslink.org/print\_expert\_vote.htm>.)

Contention 3: Voting is a civil duty